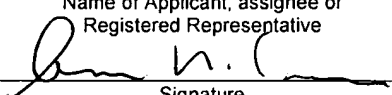
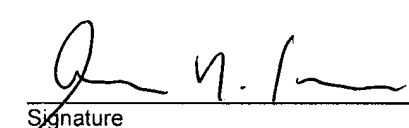
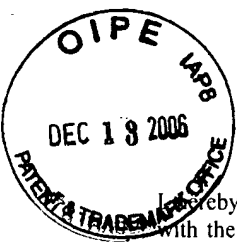


Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

PTO/SB/33 (07-05)
Approved for use through xx/xx/200x. OMB 0651-00xx
U.S. Patent and Trademark Office; U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

PRE-APPEAL BRIEF REQUEST FOR REVIEW		Docket Number (Optional) Our Case No. 10210-10	
<p>I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service, with sufficient postage, as Express Mail No. EV 906813617 US in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 <u>On December 13, 2006</u> Date of Deposit</p> <p><u>Amir N. Penn (40,767)</u> Name of Applicant, assignee or Registered Representative</p> <p> Signature</p> <p><u>December 13, 2006</u> Date of Signature</p>	Application Number: 10/808,067		Filed: March 24, 2004
	First Named Inventor: Toshio Mikiya		
	Art Unit: 3679	Examiner: Dunwoody, Aaron M.	
<p>Applicant requests review of the final rejection in the above-identified application. No amendments are being filed with this request.</p> <p>This request is being filed with a Notice of Appeal.</p> <p>The review is requested for the reason(s) stated on the attached sheet(s). Note: No more than five(5) pages may be provided.</p> <p>I am the</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> applicant/inventor.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> assignee of record of the entire interest. See 37 CFR 3.71. Statement under 37 CFR 3.73(b) is enclosed. (Form PTO/SB/96)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> attorney or agent of record. Registration number _____</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> attorney or agent acting under 37 CFR 1.34. Registration number if acting under 37 CFR 1.34. <u>40,767</u>.</p> <p>Note: Signatures of all inventors or assignees of record of the entire interest or their representative(s) are required. Submit multiple forms if more than one signature is required, see below.*</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *Total of <u>5</u> forms are submitted.</p>			
		<p> Signature</p> <p><u>Amir N. Penn</u> Typed or Printed Name</p> <p><u>312-321-4200</u> Telephone number</p> <p><u>December 13, 2006</u> Date</p>	



I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service, with sufficient postage, as Express Mail No. EV 906813617 US in an envelope addressed to:

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450
on December 13, 2006

Date of Deposit

Amir N. Penn (40,767)

Name of applicant, assignee or
Registered Representative

[Handwritten Signature]

Signature

12/13/06

Date of Signature

Our Case No. 10210/10

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:)
)
Toshio Mikiya, et al.)
)
Serial No. 10/808,067)
)
Filing Date: March 24, 2004)
)
For: PIPE COUPLER)
)
)

Examiner: Dunwoody, Aaron M.
Group Art Unit No. 3679

Mail Stop AF
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313

PRE-APPEAL BRIEF REQUEST FOR REVIEW

Applicants request review of the final rejection in the above-identified application. This request is being filed with a notice of appeal.

The review is requested for the reasons stated on the attached sheets. No more than five (5) pages are provided.

REMARKS

Status of case

Claims 7-10 and 12 are currently pending in this case. Claims 1-2 and 4-6 are cancelled, and claims 3 and 11 are withdrawn from consideration.

In the final Office Action dated June 16, 2006, the Examiner rejected all of the pending claims as anticipated under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as follows:

Claims	Cited References
1, 2, 4, 5, and 7-10	Rogers (U.S. 4,592,387)
1, 2, 4-10, and 12	Hobson (U.S. 4,074,698)

I. The Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) Fail to State a Prima Facie Case of Anticipation

Applicants submit that the pending rejections fail to cite references teaching or suggesting all of the claimed features.

A. Rejection of claim 7 over Rogers

Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejection of claim 7 over the Rogers reference. Claim 7 relates to a female coupler adapted to be connected to a male coupler.

The female coupler claimed in claim 7 includes, *inter alia*, a coupler body having a cylindrical male coupler receiving portion with a radial hole adapted to receive the male coupler therein, a locking member disposed in the radial hole and movable between an engagement position and a disengagement position, an outer movable member mounted on the cylindrical male coupler receiving portion and movable between a locking position and an unlocking position, a handle fixedly connected to the outer movable member, and a holding member for engaging with and holding the outer movable member to the unlocking position.

The claimed handle works in combination with the holding member in order to enable proper coupling of the female coupler with the male coupler. Specifically, the handle on the female coupler is grasped and advanced to the male coupler. Further, the holding member engages with and holds the outer movable member in the unlocking position, thereby preventing the outer movable member from locking prematurely and blocking the insertion the female coupler with the male coupler. After the male coupler has been inserted into the cylindrical male coupler receiving

portion and reached a position wherein the locking member receiving recess is located at an axial position for receiving the locking member, the holding member is disengaged from the outer movable member to allow the outer movable member to move to the locking position to thereby complete the secure connection of the male and female couplers.

In the final Office Action, the Examiner stated that claim 7 was anticipated by the Rogers reference. In rejecting the claim, the Examiner only cites Figures 2-5 of the Rogers reference. Figure 5 of the Rogers reference is reproduced below:

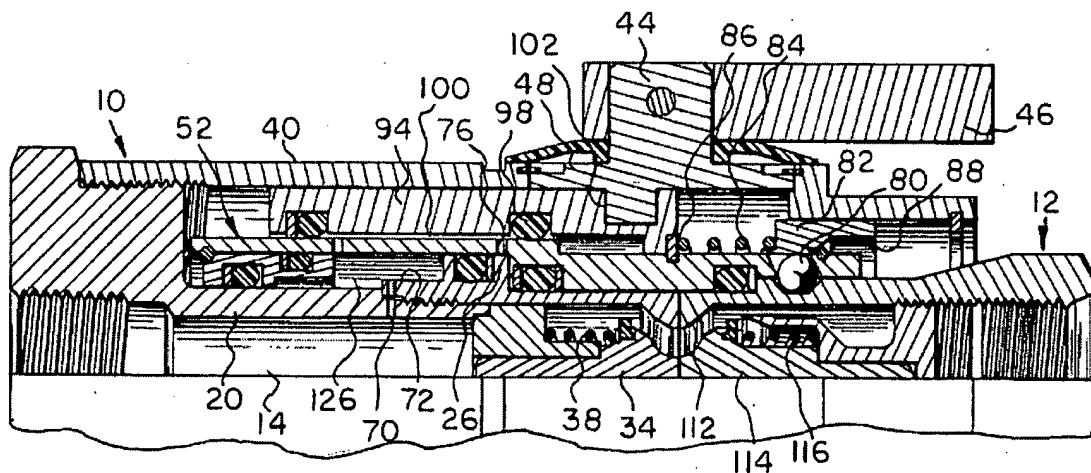
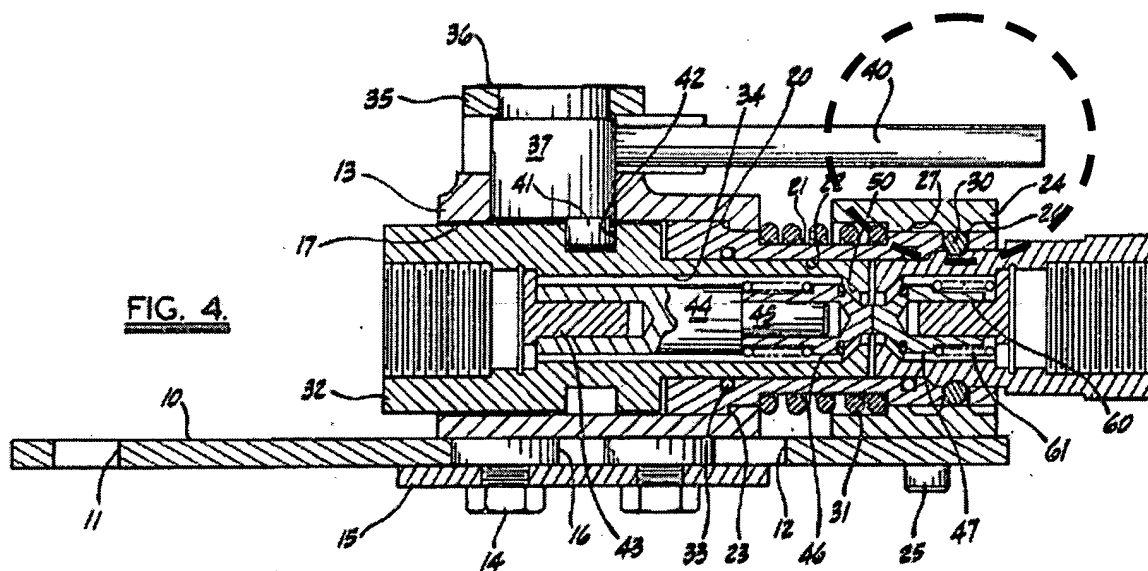


FIG 5

The Rogers reference fails to teach or suggest either the claimed handle or the holding member. The Rogers reference fails to teach a holding member for engaging with and holding the outer movable member to the unlocking position. The Rogers reference teaches that the female part 10 is coupled to the male part 12 when the ball detents 80 engage the detect actuator 82. See col. 5, lines 31-37; see also Figs. 2-5. Unlike the present invention as claimed, there is no holding member that prevents engagement of the ball detents 80 with the detect actuator 82 prior to insertion of the female part 10 into the male part 12. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claim 7 is allowable over the Rogers reference for at least the reasons provided.

B. Rejection of claim 7 over Hobson


Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejection of claim 7 over the Hobson reference. In the final Office Action, the Examiner stated that claim 7 was anticipated by the Hobson reference, only citing Figures 1-4 of the Hobson reference. Figure 4 of the Hobson reference (with an addition to highlight certain elements) is reproduced below:



Similar to the Rogers reference, the Hobson reference fails to teach or suggest a handle in combination with a holding member for engaging with and holding the outer movable member to the unlocking position. The Hobson reference teaches a handle 40 attached to and used to rotate cam cylinder 37 in order to engage locking balls 30 into groove 27. And, similar to the Rogers reference, the Hobson reference fails to teach or suggest any holding member to that prevents engaging of the locking balls 30 into groove 27. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claim 7 is allowable over the art of record for at least the reasons provided.

The errors in the pending obviousness rejections are discussed with respect to the independent claims for purposes of brevity. The respective dependent claims are submitted to be allowable for at least the same reasons. Applicants submit that this case is in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,


Amir N. Penn
Registration No. 40,767
Attorney for Applicants

BRINKS HOFER GILSON & LIONE
P.O. Box 10395
Chicago, Illinois 60610
(312) 321-7732